

Health Alert Notice

Wyoming Department of Health

May 12, 2009, 5:00 p.m.

(WDH SF HAN 3.0)

Novel Influenza A H1N1 (Swine-like) Virus

***NEW UPDATES:**

- **National and international situation**
- **New Public Health Laboratory reporting policy for Novel Influenza A H1N1 (Swine Flu)**
- **Treatment recommendations from WDH**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health officials in multiple states are investigating cases of febrile respiratory illness caused by Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus. As of 12:00 pm MDT May 12, 2009 CDC is reporting 3,009 confirmed cases in 44 states and the District of Columbia.

According to the World Health Organization, thirty countries around the world are reporting confirmed cases. At this time, CDC recommends that U.S. travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Mexico.

Currently, the State of Wyoming is not reporting any probable or confirmed cases of Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus.

WDH MAKES THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Healthcare providers should contact WDH to arrange testing for the novel influenza virus on the following patients:**

Patients with febrile respiratory illness who have traveled within 7 days to a community either within the United States or internationally where there are one or more confirmed swine influenza case, or were in close contact with other persons who have been diagnosed with swine influenza.

Patients hospitalized with an illness that could be due to, or associated with, influenza.

- **Wyoming healthcare providers should conduct testing for influenza per their usual influenza testing means on ALL patients with an illness compatible with influenza.**

Brent D. Sherard, M.D., M.P.H., FACP, Director and State Health Officer

Governor Dave Freudenthal

- **Healthcare providers should submit appropriate specimens to the WDH Public Health Laboratory (PHL) on ALL patients with a POSITIVE test for influenza by first calling WDH Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 307-777-8640, 1-877-996-9000, or 1-888-996-9104. Specimen collection for submission to the PHL should follow the attached protocol. Providers should then call WDH Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 307-777-8640, 1-877-996-9000, or 1-888-996-9104 to arrange shipping and testing. For questions on the laboratory protocol, healthcare providers should call the PHL at 777-7431.**
- **Healthcare providers who participate in the WDH Influenza Sentinel Surveillance System are encouraged to submit specimens to the PHL for influenza testing on ALL patients with an illness compatible with influenza (regardless of rapid test results). Sentinel providers should use the standard specimen collection and laboratory submission procedures as for seasonal influenza.**
- **WDH is recruiting healthcare providers for the sentinel surveillance system. Participation in this system provides invaluable information on trends of influenza incidence and on the subtypes of circulating influenza viruses. This is particularly important in situations where a novel influenza virus is circulating. To participate call Reggie McClinton, WDH Influenza Epidemiologist, 777-8640.**
- **Healthcare providers should notify the WDH of all clusters of influenza-like illness to arrange testing for the novel influenza virus at the WDH PHL (Reggie McClinton, WDH Influenza Epidemiologist, 777-8640, or call the WDH All Hazards Line at 1-888-996-9104).**
- **Any Wyoming healthcare provider who perceives an unusual increase in the number or clustering of influenza cases, or observes an unusual clinical picture of influenza-like illness (ILI) such as unusual severity or progression, should notify Reggie McClinton, WDH Influenza Epidemiologist, 777-8640, or the WDH All Hazards Line at 1-888-996-9104.**

Healthcare providers and laboratories are also reminded that influenza is a reportable disease year-round in Wyoming. Please report Influenza cases to Reggie McClinton, WDH Influenza Epidemiologist, 777-8640, or fax reports to 777-5573.

Revised WDH PHL reporting policy for Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus

The WDH PHL now has the capability to test specifically for the Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus. This capability will streamline the testing protocol for the PHL and increase the number of samples which can be tested for the novel influenza virus. From this point forward, the PHL will be screening specimens for influenza A, and if positive the specimen will be tested for Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus. Specimens will no longer be tested for influenza B. Specimens positive for influenza A will only be tested for Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus and not subtyped for seasonal influenza strains. Therefore the results you receive will only apply to influenza A and the Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine-like) virus.

Current WDH Recommendations for Patients presenting with influenza-like illness (ILI) and Their Household Contacts

1. Avoid contact with ill persons.
2. Cover nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing, and throw used tissues in a trash can.
3. Wash hands frequently with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand gel.
4. Stay home from work, school, or travel while ill with flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat and body aches. *However, those who are severely ill (such as having trouble breathing) should seek medical care.*
5. If any household contacts develop symptoms of a respiratory illness or a fever they should remain home at the earliest sign of illness. They should not go to work, school, attend large gatherings, and should minimize contact with others outside their home.

If after consultation with public health officials swine flu is suspected or confirmed in a patient, more specific recommendations may be provided by public health officials.

Wyoming case information, recommendations, and laboratory information can be found on the WDH website at: <http://wdh.state.wy.us/phsd/epiid/swineflu.html>

Clinical guidance on laboratory safety, case definitions, infection control and information for the public are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>.

• Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Biosafety Guidelines for Laboratory Workers:
http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidelines_labworkers.htm

• Interim Guidance for Infection Control for Care of Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection in a Healthcare Setting:
http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidelines_infection_control.htm

• WDH Interim Guidance on Antiviral Recommendations for Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A H1N1 Virus Infection and Close Contacts:
<http://www.health.wyo.gov/phsd/epiid/sfhcp.html>

Influenza Virus Collection Protocol

MATERIALS NEEDED

Swab (Dacron or polyester) **Do not use cotton, calcium alginate or wood shafts**
Diagnostic Specimen Mailer (cooler)
Ice packs
Viral Transport Media- VCM, M4, M5 or any suitable viral transport media
Influenza Requisition Form
Biohazard bag

Specimen Collection :

Observe universal precautions and use proper Personal Protection Equipment.
Specimen should be collected within 3 days of onset of symptoms.
Use only swabs noted above.

Preferable Specimen: Nasal Swab

Acceptable Specimen : nasopharyngeal swab, nasal aspirate/wash

Collect swab and place in viral transport medium

Break shafts of swabs to permit closure of tube with screw cap.

Screw cap on tube securely to avoid leakage.

Label each specimen with patient's name and collection date.

Refrigerate specimen(s) until ready to ship.

Shipping:

Mail specimens using overnight delivery

Package each specimen individually in a biohazard bag with absorbent.

Complete the request form entirely and place in the biohazard bag pocket

Multiple specimens collected same day may be shipped in the same shipping container

Place frozen ice packs in with the specimens to maintain at 4C

Close container and seal with tape, affix label

Deliver to the nearest State Courier Location or send via Fed Ex

NOTE: Store all transport media and collected specimens at 4C until shipment!

**SPECIMENS MUST ARRIVE AT THE LABORATORY WITHIN 24-48 HRS
AFTER COLLECTION**

If you have any questions concerning collection or shipment, please call the Wyoming Public Health Laboratory. 307-777-7431